

Viva la resolución! New year, new start?



By [Amy Gibbons](#), Deputy Editor (2015/16)

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Image: [Chris Chabot](#)

January 1st 2015 has come and gone, and I can honestly say that I am an entirely unchanged person.

This may be because I chose to make no New Year's resolutions this time around, but looking back on January 2014, 2013, '12, '11 ... '06, I honestly don't think I've ever had one that's stuck.

It was last year that I began to lose faith. When I found myself convinced that 2014 would be 'the year of the gym', just as 2013 had been 'project bikini' and 2012 'the ultimate salad detox', I realised, for me at least, New Year's is little more than the beginning of another chapter, which, as chapters generally do, continues with the same plot, features the same central characters and generally remains consistent in tone and style.

In short, not a lot changes. A common delusion, though, is that a new year will take on the form, not of a new chapter, but an entirely different novel. (Has this metaphor spiralled into chaos yet?)

New Year's resolutions simply don't work, because as the countdown ends and the champagne glasses clink, nothing has really changed.

Years are merely a concept of time; as the clock strikes twelve we celebrate continuing to orbit the sun in the same fashion we always have. Just like a chapter, a new year is a tool employed by the author to structure the story. It is a bookmark, or a reference point.

But don't get me wrong, a bookmark can still be significant.

We should never lose faith in our ability to make a change for the better, either for ourselves or for others. 2015 can still be the year I change my lifestyle, but I shouldn't assume the 2014-15 transition will take care of that for me.

If I want to hit the gym more, pay closer attention to what I eat, take up a new sport or cut back on my alcohol intake, I have to be the one to take responsibility for that.

We fail come February every year because the novelty of the 'New Year, New Me' has worn off. So here's what I suggest as a solution.

You can make a change anyhow, anywhere, any time of the year. But you must acknowledge that such a change isn't going to happen overnight, nor will it redefine you as a person. In addition, falling off the bandwagon does not mean that you must wait for another "significant moment" to start over; this is a trap that "resolutionists" often fall into.

Example: "I've not been to the gym for a week now, and today I binged on Doritos!"

"Ah well. I'm going to make up for it and eat nothing but celery for a week. I'll also go for a run twice a day and do 10 sit-ups every morning. Starting Monday."

Set yourself short-term goals so you don't become disheartened when the scales don't show that you've lost your goal amount of ten pounds in one week, and don't procrastinate your efforts away.

And remember, a dramatic change must be dramatic.

Just as nothing truly changes in the New Year; by January 2nd the shops are running as usual, we get up and go to work, it is easy to revert back to your old lifestyle unless you step out of your comfort zone and scrap your first draft.

But to be fair that's extraordinarily rich coming from a girl who's now had chips for dinner two days in a row.



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